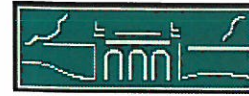




South Pasadena Public Library
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES
May 19, 2014



CONVENE:

Board President Brendan Durrett called the special meeting of the Library Board of Trustees of the South Pasadena Public Library to order in the Amedee O. "Dick" Richards Council Chambers at South Pasadena City Hall on May 19, 2014 at 7:05 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Trustees Present

Brendan Durrett, President
Ed Pearson, Vice President
Constance Lue, Secretary
Andy Lippman, Trustee

Also Present

Hilary Straus, Assistant City Manager
Joan Frye Williams, Library Planning
Consultant (via telephone)
Richard D. Schneider, MD, Councilmember
Ann Messana, President Friends Board
Kristen Dube, Secretary Friends Board
Steve Fjeldsted, City Librarian
Paula Knop, Senior Librarian/Adult Services
Barbara Posner, Senior Librarian/Support Services
Maida Wong, Senior Librarian/Children's Services
Chelsea Clark, Reference Librarian
Sean Faye, Administrative Secretary

EXCUSED: Ann Penn, Trustee

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **Public Comment** - Board President Brendan Durrett opened the meeting by welcoming the Library Staff and members of the Friends Board by asking for initial comments before the results of the revised Library Operations Study, which had been made available to the staff on May 15, 2014, were discussed. There were no comments to be made.
2. **Review of 4/16/14 Minutes** – Ed Pearson moved to formally approve the 4/16/14 Minutes. **MSC: Ed Pearson/Andy Lippman – all approved.**
3. **Consideration of Library Operation Study** – Assistant City Manager Hilary Straus said that this revised report reflects the Public Comment responses to the draft Library Operations Study that was held between 4/16/14-5/2/14. He continued by saying that the Board is not required to act on the study's findings and that he envisioned the evening as an opportunity for a quick overview and discussion. We will then schedule a follow-up meeting to properly digest the information presented. A hand-out of all Public Comments that were received, which may not have been factored into the report, was distributed to the Board members. Hilary said the challenge would be to take the study's findings in manageable portions and cautioned that it would not be possible for all actionable items to move at the same speed, and that some may not move at all. With that, he introduced the Library Planning Consultant Joan Frye Williams (via telephone).

Joan said things have moved along since the last meeting on 4/16/14. There had been a few corrections to the data in the most recent draft of the State Report in terms of the amount spent for book purchases and staff expenditures. With this new information those items are no longer

problematic and Joan expressed gratitude for the Library Staff discovering and correcting those errors.

Joan said that she received input from 17 people, some more than once, during the comment period of the Draft Study. Library Staff were the largest contributors of these comments, but suggestions were also made by those with a close association to the Library as well as the general public. Joan reported that each contributor's comments were prefaced with an introduction and an explanation as to why the person was responding.

The following items were cited multiple times during the public comment period and added to the report:

- Facility Size – analysis was extended to neighboring libraries with meeting rooms.
- Teen Services – unlike Children's Services, specific comparative data is not available from neighboring libraries but an effort was made to calculate the data found.
- Volunteers – analysis was extended to compare volunteer contributions from neighboring libraries.
- IT Support – by far the most passionate responses. It is clear that current levels of IT Support do not cover the number of hours the library is open or is available during the busiest hours.
- Management Structuring - an alternate approach to free up Management Staff for other priorities and spoke specifically to the responsibilities of the City Librarian.

Joan expressed to the Board that they have three options as to how to proceed with the information that she has gathered. Those options are:

1. Find new resources – find sources of money outside of government funding.
2. Shift current resources – change current allocation of resources or apply them in new ways to new priorities.
3. No action – maintaining the status quo despite the concerns of the community.

Joan recommended the Board examine the option of shifting current resources.

Joan also added a "change factor" to her recommendations to assess how significant a change it would be to implement her suggestions. They are represented as "low, medium, or high" and are a measurement of familiarity, rather than difficulty. She then proceeded to discuss her basic recommendations:

Technology – offer reliable Wi-Fi service, upgrade or replace current computers, add portable devices and tablets, expand social media presence, install self-checkout stations, capture staff time from other parts of the Library, and enhance the Library's website into a full service e-branch.

Collections – Increase the e-book collection while continuing to refresh the print book collection, add a service for downloadable music, and dedicate 25-30% of annual materials budget to e-format items.

Facilities – Retain a professional consultant to complete an in-depth facility and space allocation study. Also, reconsider the flexibility of current spaces towards targeted audiences and specific functions.

Service Model – Offer specialized services during a range of hours in a drop-in format, prepare all staff to be first responders for customer support, consolidate desks to a single point of service for adults and a separate one for children, and update job descriptions for all staff. Visit other libraries to see how their staffs are organized and re-evaluate what is working at SPPL and what is not.

Teen Services – Offer at least one program per week that focuses on teens, work in conjunction with local middle and high schools towards teen outreach, and have staff responsible for teens form an advisory council and recruit council members from the community.

Staffing Model – Expand volunteer opportunities in skilled, un-skilled, one-time or ongoing capacities to partner them with paid staff; improve staff’s technological training and team-working skills, and restructure management in terms of addressing issues not covered by existing systems.

Decision Support – Develop new data collection methods, have staff continue their efforts of engaging with the community, and administer focus groups to identify where more input is needed. The Board of Trustees was also encouraged to engage with the community on a regular basis.

Revenue Development – The Friends of the South Pasadena Public Library are doing a tremendous job, but there is a need to diversify and look at other sources of potential income. It was emphasized that we need to cultivate beyond our base, which is comprised of more than just library users, and that the data shows we are as likely to get volunteers or monetary donations from someone who believes in what we do as from those who have a direct connection with our institution.

Joan concluded her presentation of recommendations by stating that everything she has suggested has been successfully implemented by other libraries. Joan submitted a list of useful comments to the Board that weren’t relevant to this study, but she did not include any comments regarding specific staff members, she restricted the comments to only what was germane and useful, and organized them by category, rather than by when they were received. Joan expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work with the SPPL and then turned the meeting over to Hilary.

Hilary acknowledged that more time will be needed to fully process the items Joan highlighted. He suggested that the Board return in a month for a meeting to hear from the City Librarian and the Assistant City Manager to begin breaking down these items into more manageable steps. Hilary announced that he had spoken with Trustee Ann Penn prior to the meeting and then read a statement she had sent in her absence:

“The library operational study as perceived and written by Joan Frye Williams is a very comprehensive analysis of the library’s performance in itself and in comparison with other local libraries. It does build upon and support the strategic plan as well as provide a blue print for future growth and development.

I believe that the suggestion for an in-depth facility and space allocation study is very important to pursue at the beginning of the process as the recommendations given will have a direct impact upon all other decisions made regarding technology, staffing needs, enlargement or changes in configuration of programs offered, as well as financial needs to support these changes. Secondly, I believe that a team management approach is the only way such changes can be accomplished without disrupting or reducing the community support and good will our library has achieved over these past years. The staff, head librarian, and Board of Trustees need to work closely together as a team to make these changes happen on a positive note. With this in mind, modernizing the goals, operations, services and volunteer efforts of the library can be moved forward in a positive and productive manner. The effectiveness of putting in place these suggestions will rest upon the cooperation and desire of ALL parties to succeed.

Specifically, it is my feeling that in areas of technology, teen services and data collection should be supported and enlarged to meet the public need. Changes in staffing and service models need

Careful consideration and thought to bring about the desired effect. It is definitely time to rewrite the job descriptions of the head librarian, staff and the by-laws of the Board of Trustees to help provide adequate guidelines that will support those who lead in a positive manner. In pursuing the outline and suggestions made by Joan Frye Williams, the library will also need the full support of the City Council and management professionally and financially to accomplish this transition. I look forward to further discussions on this proposal.”

4. 2nd Public Comment

- Brendan Durrett agreed with Hilary’s suggestion of meeting again in a few weeks to focus on the results of this study. He also expressed appreciation for Ann Penn’s remarks.
- Ed Pearson said that it would take time to examine the items Joan cited, but thought that a lot of them wouldn’t generate much controversy to implement. He said that it may be possible to jump on several of these items, such as reallocation of resources, right away.
- Andy Lippman said he was in favor of the idea of focus groups and also encouraged the Board to interact more often with the public and the staff, not just for ideas but to get a better sense of the community’s expectations. He also suggested that the Board visit the Glendora Library and observe other libraries in the process of transition.
- Constance Lue expressed gratitude towards the staff that took the opportunity to respond to the study and agreed with Ann Penn’s comments about creating the best environment possible for the residents and patrons. She found the study to be very comprehensive and thought it was unfortunate there weren’t more comments from the community. Constance agreed that we should follow the recommendations of Joan Frye Williams, but certain agreements need to be reached. She said that she is excited by the challenge of discovering how to actualize the study’s results.
- Steve Fjeldsted thanked everyone for their participation and extended additional praise for Joan Frye Williams. He said it would be up to the staff, the Board and the Friends to decide which recommendations to follow but thought it best to start with the low hanging fruit and build momentum. Steve noted that the Library’s current Strategic Plan expires in 2015 and thought it would be beneficial to publish a report card to show how we’ve met those goals and objectives.
- Ann Messana said that on behalf of the Friends she looks forward to continuing to be a valuable partner in this process.
- Hilary commented that change of any kind is not easy and this will be as much a human enterprise as a technical one. He said that he was moved by the comments and they will weigh heavily on him as he develops a method of reaching a consensus based on the report’s recommendations.
- Senior Librarian Paula Knop stated that the staff has also digested this plan pretty quickly, but she wanted to make clear some of the things that are thoroughly in place now to make the Board aware. She continued that the staff has been working from the Strategic Plan to pursue items that are mentioned in this report. Paula emphasized that servicing the public is at the very heart of what the Library does and that the human interaction the patrons experience reinforces that sense of community.

Paula said she and the staff are in full support of acquiring new technology, but that would necessitate consistent and dependable technical support. The staff is capable of basic troubleshooting and the day-to-day operations of the library, but it is crucial to have a higher level of technical expertise to maintain higher level things such as servers. Paula said that we are expanding in social media and that while our e-book collection continues to grow she cautioned that e-books are five times as expensive as printed books, but with a considerable shift to the budget this can be expanded. While we have a very strong music selection, Paula agreed that downloadable audio is something to be explored further. Also, self check-out stations would be wholeheartedly embraced.

The staff has been investigating how to augment and enhance our catalog, examining other resources and looking at vendors that could possibly assist us with this.

Regarding the one-desk scenario, Paula acknowledged that restructuring management, while still maintaining the day-to-day activities of the Library, will be an interesting conversation. She added that we currently have roving teams of staff members in place, but there will always be a need for someone to catalog books. It will be important for certain daily operations to be clearly identified.

The overall goal will be what is good for both the Library and the community.

- Chelsea Clark, the Local History Librarian, spoke of where we are in the process and clarified that the majority of the staff are quite excited by the prospect of change and want the community to enjoy what we provide. She explained that the staff is remarkably close with one another and often work in collaboration and would love to work as a team with the Board and develop a closer relationship with them. Chelsea closed by saying that she is eager to be involved in this process and to make it a positive experience for everybody.
- Hilary asked for the Board to be aware that facilities issues are also a part of the City's Strategic Plan and to that end the City Council has already formed an Ad Hoc Facilities Committee to pursue this matter further.
- Joan summarized that the goal is to have a multiplier effect so the library staff can produce units of work that can be used multiple times, as opposed to customized work. Prepackaged materials supplemented with individual consultation could be utilized by more people. She urged the Library to use every possible benefit from discovered solutions for our patrons, particularly for reoccurring situations, to build a larger base for people to draw upon.
- Brendan thanked Joan and said he would be thrilled to have more inclusion from the staff in future meetings and would love to be besieged with the staff's thoughts. He noted that change isn't so bad as long as you know why you're changing and thanked everyone for their attendance.
- Hilary asked to Board to select a date for the next Library Operations Study meeting and they agreed on 6/23/14 at 7 p.m.

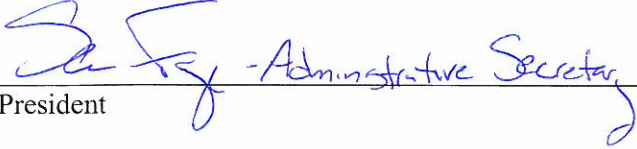
NEXT MEETING: The next regular meeting for the Library Board of Trustees will be on 6/12/14 in the Ray Bradbury Conference Room at the Library at 7 p.m. The next Special Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees will be on 6/23/14 in the Library Community Room at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

The special meeting of May 19, 2014 was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Minutes approved _____ as written.

Minutes approved _____ as corrected.



President